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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Michigan Awarded Again for Excellence in Information Technology

**Lansing** – Michigan made its mark *again* on the national level for excellence in information technology, receiving recognition at the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO) 2004 Recognition Awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Information Technology in New Orleans, Louisiana. Having just received the number one ranking in digital government from the Center for Digital Government, Michigan has now been recognized by NASCIO for creating cost effective, innovative solutions in the operation of state government. There were 120 nominations from 36 states and winners were selected in eight categories. Michigan was selected as the winner in two of the eight categories.

NASCIO President and Missouri CIO, Gerry Wethington, stated, "The NASCIO Recognition Awards program showcases preeminent state information technology solutions. Award recipients define NASCIO's vision to *fully serve the public trust through the efficient and effective use of technology*. NASCIO is pleased to recognize best practices in the states, highlighting their continued efforts to deliver quality services to citizens and enable state business agendas."

Michigan's first award came in the "Digital Government - Government to Citizen" category, with the selection of the Michigan Electronic Filed Unemployment Claims Project. Michigan's telephone and Internet filed unemployment claims system is currently handling 99% of all unemployment claims, claims that were filed manually just three short years ago. This system allows citizens to submit unemployment claims from the convenience of their homes using the Internet or the telephone rather than being forced to visit a branch office that could be miles away. Michigan's move to the new paperless system has allowed for the closing of 43 branch offices, as all telephone and Internet claims are processed in one of three claim centers. The new system has also been effective in eliminating incomplete or bad data that often occurred in the old manual system.

Teri Takai, Director of the Michigan Department of Information Technology, is pleased that Michigan is again being recognized. "Michigan continues to demonstrate how information technology is making state government more accessible and cost effective for our citizens," commented Takai.

Michigan's second award came in the "Security and Business Continuity" category, with the selection of the Michigan Critical Incident Management System. To address an outdated information management system at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), the E Team Critical Incident Management System (CIMS) software application was selected as the preferred information management tool. E Team was installed on computers in the SEOC in conjunction with the GIS mapping software, and because E Team is a web based application, it is now being used by all state agencies, over 110 local emergency management programs, numerous local police, fire, emergency medical technicians, hospital/medical facilities, other emergency responders, and critical infrastructures within Michigan. E Team enables the state to easily share disaster response and recovery information in real time with affected local response organizations, federal agencies, neighboring states, the Province of Ontario, or appropriate non-governmental response and recovery organizations such as the American Red Cross. During the power blackout that affected a large portion of the northeast United States in August 2003, the CIMS proved invaluable and was used extensively by state agencies within the SEOC, helping to restore critical systems and services.

NASCIO represents the state chief information officers from the 50 states, six U.S. territories and the District of Columbia. Members include cabinet and senior level state officials responsible for information resource management. Other IT officials participate as associate members and private sector representatives may become corporate members.

Full submissions from all nominations are posted on NASCIO's website at <https://www.nascio.org/awards/index.cfm>.

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